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The Future Perfect of the Archive: re-thinking performance in the age of third nature

Artists in the Archive has focused upon the many ways in which artists working today are engaging with and using the remains of performance, the documents, records, ephemera and residual traces of the ‘live’ event of performance that make up the diverse media of its archives. Through a series of contributions, made by artists and scholars, the range of case studies has demonstrated how performance-makers and live-artists have continued to trouble notions of what constitutes the ‘original’ performance, how ‘histories’ of performance are written, and how both the archive and the ‘idea’ of the archive are used to inform and inflect practice and make new works. I want now to look prospectively towards the ‘future’ of the archive and offer some speculations on how performance-makers will have to come to respond to the fundamental shifts in our everyday use of new technologies. In part, I want to further the argument others have made that artists’ engagement with the archive does not provide what the historian seeks – a *reflective* space in between now and then, which produces versions of what could have been and holds them up as ‘equally’, if not ‘more’, significant than the performance itself. Distinctively, the artist uses the archive as *recursive* space, informing what’s to come; and more crucially for the future of the archive, offers a decisive resistance to the challenges of new technologies, which I describe as ‘third nature’, and the hegemonic cultural and socio-political assemblages, within which both technology in general and the archive as fact and idea are embedded. Using the phenomenology of Martin Heidegger, I propose that the artist, by refusing to use up archive-technology as (in his terms) ‘resource’, by obliging it to appear *as itself*, re-minds us of this fundamental difference between ourselves as human beings and technology as non-human.

Even though I am driven as an artist-scholar to come to terms with the archive, because of its presence in my work, here I do not want to set the practitioner against the historian as I fully appreciate the role

history plays in informing and enriching contemporary performance practices – the works at hand and yet to be done. However, I do intend to caution against what I see as the dangers of our archive culture inherent in this current phase of techno-capitalism, and in so doing, confront an unhelpful orthodoxy about the relation of the archive to practice, which ends up unintentionally colluding in performance's commodification and capitulation to those dangers.

When the noise of mobile phone chat interrupted my understanding of the work before me, and numerous cameras obscured my view, my brain simply clamped shut.

(Helen Cole writing about the DaoDao Festival, Beijing 2004 in Brine and Shu 2005)

These pieces' [by Qiu Zhijie, Yang Zhichao, Wang Chuyu and Wang Hong] original creative acts are so intertwined with their documentary records that we can hardly distinguish when the artists' performances end and their documentations begin.

(Cheng 2012: 174)

Meiling Cheng's description of the synchronicity of performance and its documentation echoes Philip Auslander's polemic that the documents of performance themselves perform, that ontologically we cannot conceive of the performance without the document, indeed, in a reversal worthy of Derrida, to all intents and purposes the document stages the performance, in essence, *is* the performance: 'I am suggesting that performance documents are not analogous to constatives, but to performatives: in other words, *the act of documenting an event as a performance is what constitutes it as such.*' (Auslander 2006: 5, original emphasis). What Cheng sees as a necessary cultural-political tactic to ensure the preservation and dissemination of radical live-art in China – its documentation and circulation through documents (Cheng 2012: 182), Amelia Jones would understand as the necessary means by which we make sense of performance, herself reversing the hierarchy of 'being there' over 'reading' about it from its archival remains:

As I know from my own experience of the ‘real’ in general and, in particular, live performances in recent years, these often become more meaningful when reappraised in later years; it is hard to identify patterns of history while one is embedded in them. We ‘invent’ these patterns, pulling the past together into a manageable picture, retrospectively.

(Jones 1997: 12)

More about manageability later. But for the moment, for these writers, performance as an (efficacious) art-form is inaugurated *in the instance* of its documentation. Whilst it is acknowledged that the document cannot capture ‘all’ the performance may have entailed, it nevertheless takes priority, for either ontological (Auslander) or ideological (Jones) reasons, over whatever the performance might have been. As far as performance is concerned, there is nothing outside the document. I would contest that Auslander bases his argument on a false conflation of Austinian performatives with performance *per se* as an art-form: in short, to be performative is not the same as to perform; and to perform for the camera is not the same as to perform for an audience as each kind of performing produces distinct art-forms – the photo-work and the performance (see Auslander’s discussion of Acconci’s *Photo-Piece*, 2006: 4-6) – a distinction he has more recently acknowledged in discussing performances made specifically for experiencing online (see ‘The Liveness of Watching Online: Performance Room’ in Wee 2016). And Jones, in my opinion, fails to consider the overwhelming logocentric force of the document when she argues that performances and their records are equally (if differently) informative, resulting in a flawed assertion that there is an ‘equal’ role for the historian in interpreting what the artist may have been doing (Jones 1997: 12): in short, paraphrasing Orwell, both performances and documents may well be equal, but some are more equal than others.

Nevertheless, these arguments about the primacy of documentation over performance as event have largely held sway and become the current orthodoxy. I intend to resist this orthodoxy by focusing on the archive *as technology*: I want to propose a counter-theory that the distinctiveness and efficacy of performance as an art-form is not inaugurated in the instant of its documentation and their subsequent interpretations by historians. This misrecognizes performance’s essential relation as *being with* the

archive, resulting in its present being immediately taken up in its future perfect – what it will have been to future historians. It even goes beyond André Lepecki's idea of 'the will to archive' as that which identifies 'in a past work still non-exhausted creative fields of 'impalpable possibilities'' (2010: 31), to figure performance's first relation as being with the technological: meaning, its present is immediately taken up with that which cannot be conjugated. By reversing Heidegger's insightful definition of technology, that it is 'therefore no mere means. Technology is a way of revealing. ... *Technē* belongs to bringing forth, to *poiēsis*; it is something poetic,' (1978: 318) I intend to place performance essentially in relation to the archive as technology. This shifts the argument from 'liveness' versus record, 'presence' versus absence. I will then go on to speculate about the artists' role in the future of the archive, based on current developments in archiving technologies.

As a performance-maker, my practice over twenty years has been concerned with a repeated return to one basic question – why make performance in an increasingly mediatized age? In this digitized environment, what can account for the persistence of performance? As such there is an inevitable relationship to technology, but also to the archive as storehouse of performances past, and practice as research in the creating of performances present. This triangulation, within which performance as an art-form and its makers find themselves, is clearly a question of knowledge, more precisely how particular kinds of knowledge are produced, captured and disseminated. So, as a question of first principles, what is performance's claim to specialness amongst art-forms? It would not be that it is time-based or site-specific or contingent upon its participants, since other forms are arguably equally dependent upon their eventness. What performance offers us distinctively is the complexity and intensity, the multidimensionality and manifold temporalities of its bundling and intermingling of media, all gathered together and expressed by way of fleshed mixing, as Emmanuel Levinas succinctly express it: '*Esse* is *interesse*; essence is interest' (1998: 4).

Indeed, performance manifests this *being in-between* (*inter-esse*) in a particularly intense way, since it foregrounds not only its eventness, its happening in that time and in a certain place; but also the manner of this mixing of persons, their fleshed and histories, their desires and prospects. It does this through

an intensification not of one particular relation between a material, its expressing by means of a single object, and the solitary viewer, as in our relationship to painting; but by compounding the sensations of *the relation between relations*. One fundamental in-between, that of different kinds of material, each with their own means and media, their own middles that meddle each in their own curious ways, is compounded furiously in the ‘heat’ of the event with another in-between, that of the gathering of persons, each aware of the others as persons each in their own right. In performance, in putting my self into the middle of the event *as event*, its being both out of and in time, as I generally know it and then as I am experiencing it now, *entre-temps* as Deleuze and Guattari would have it (1994: 158); and its being both there and not there, as I generally position my body in space and there being potentially anywhere other than there, I put myself forth in a doubled sense: *into the midst of various middles amongst others*. This set-up and mix draws from Heidegger’s definition of the art-work as essentially an event of participation, extended through time by those who engage with it:

Preserving the work means standing within the openness of beings that happens in the work. This ‘standing-within’ of preservation, however, is a knowing. [...] He who truly knows beings knows what he wills to do in the midst of them. [...] [T]he essence of *Existenz* is out-standing standing-within the essential sunderance of the clearing of beings.

(Heidegger 1978: 192)

From this putting forth, performance-makers seek out collaborators, working each in their own medium and skill-set, each with their own discursivity – the choreographic, textual, sonic, musical, pictorial, fleshy. Each collaborator explicitly explores their own material in their own way, and in so doing sustains the open relations between different kinds of material and their composition in the performance: this is the out-standing standing-within unique to performance as an art-form (for more on this application of Heidegger, see Jones 2012). In encountering media in which they are not expert, each has to cross a void in-between channels of communication in order to collaborate. This model of collaboration produces a kind of speaking without a common language, making these collaborative relationships endlessly productive and non-resolvable. Furthermore, to borrow a metaphor from

quantum mechanics, they are complementary and compossible in that they produce worlds which cannot be equated the one with the other, and would, indeed, contradict one another, were it not that they somehow appear to work alongside each other in the ‘same’ space-time of the performance-event itself. In theory they should not work; but in practice, the work works precisely *at the point* where ‘we’ as collaborators cannot: impossible collaboration happens (see Giddens and Jones 2009 for further discussion of this idea and, in this volume, Bodies in Flight’s *Do the Wild Thing! Redux* for a practical response to these speculations).

If this being in between the in-betweens is particularly heightened in performance – Derrida did call theatre ‘the only art of life’ (1978: 247) in critiquing Artaud’s attempt to put himself outside of discourse, then how do I document this experience? How can I, if to attend to any specific discourse or practice would render the event’s plenitude down to a single medium or text? No, to record in any one language, be it choreographic, musical, pictorial, verbal, would collapse the very specificity of the event’s non-specificity, puncture the no-where of its now-here, evidenced only by the compulsively repeated failure of performance’s documentary remains after the fact. I can only stalk the realness of the performance-event itself by way of metaphor, only approach it *indirectly* by way of forcing transitionings, crossings across from the representativeness of one kind of documentary remains to the representativeness of another, moving through one document’s discursive field then phasing into another, facing another self then turning to a third. And in each phase-transition, the specific relation to the ‘performance itself’ is occasioned in its own way: it is disclosed as real, since momentarily apparent, observable, recognizable, navigable. This transitioning amongst any work’s archival remains is as if I were pulling focus from one plane to another, from foreground to background: a zone of interest becoming a place of concern; and I feel this working-across the archive as movement, as a dynamic through (irreversible) time – *as an event of archiving*.

The document pulls focus from the blur of interest *in the performance* to the hard edge of a definable object of attention *in the record*. So here, by way of each document, the ‘original’ material’s vagueness, which I feel haunting the work or exceeding in potential what the work could have possibly manifested,

comes suddenly and always surprisingly into sharp relief. However, not as if I were experiencing the work through one lens alone, but as if suddenly recognizing the concreteness of one specific material rendered all others unintelligible. Here is the peculiar clarity that strikes me about performance's documentary remains, each a glimpse in their own way that banishes all other remembrances. Whereas in the event of performance 'itself', I could say that interest dematerializes to the extent that any particular material materializes; and it is only when I sustain the materializing of interest, remain in between the betweens of the work, literally un-wording it, utterly un-phrasing it, patently blurring it, that interest can be properly opened out as new and progressive couplings of thought-sensations. This tension between sustaining the opening out of interest in the performance-event and the instances of clarity realized in performance's documentary remains becomes the productive catalyst at the heart of any encounter between performance-maker and archive.

If not uniquely, then decisively, this opens up questions about how artists work across archives and rehearsal spaces that are fundamentally *technological*, in that they tell us something about our relationship to all technologies. As a performance-maker, I experience two fundamentally different memories encountering one another in the archival remains of performances I have made: that of embodied practice, the experience of having made work over time; and that of the external record irrupting into practice from the outside. This interpolates what was felt with what could never have been felt – the image taken from the point of view I never occupied, the camera's; or even that of the page, since the word written down is never the same one that comes to mind. This struggle of lived memories with external records, the profoundly embodied, what drove the work, with the profoundly disembodied, as in – estranged, like something familiar taken from one and put at a distance, characterizes the artist's relation to the archive. And this relating of two very different kinds of recall-retrieval produce significant consequences for performance's use of its archival remains in the age of the digitized record, as a kind of externalized memory, which I aim to theorize in this chapter.

For me, there is always a certain relief in being able to step away from the relentless issue of being together-alone out-standing-standing-within the work as it is being made. A relief in temporarily

occupying the abstracted perspective of the document, looking from the outside at the quasi-object that *is* now the work at hand. Indeed, ironically, as Jones points out (1997: 12, quoted above), it may well be that only by means of the recording device's technological capacity, whether that be camera and computer or pen and paper, can any performance-maker actually realize their work as object, as some(quasi-)thing that can be pointed to and so commented upon. The relief of being able to separate clearly the outside from the inside of the making of the work, disentangling out-standing-standing-within, can provide this necessary refuge from the interminable issue of being in-between the making amongst collaborators. Temporally, this happens as a kind of rhythmic crossing-across from the rehearsal room to the archive, similar to those enacted within the making between media and collaborators. However, this time a transitioning happens from inside to outside that making: a stepping away that the artist temporarily makes in order *to look askance* at the work they have been in the midst of. The gap between these two different perspectives produces *a potentiality* between two profoundly different ways of knowing – insider know-how and critical knowledge. This potentiality becomes the gradient that drives the various crossings-across the artist makes back and forth inside—outside their return to and re-use of archives. It is also why the artist has to make these journeys into the archive *alone*, from their own embodied experience and memories towards these documents, by way of their own self and will amongst collaborators, as Tim Etchells remarked about the process of re-rehearsing Forced Entertainment's *Bloody Mess* (2004) seven years later:

In many ways, the 'show', as we are rehearsing it in Toulouse, can only be understood as something caught perpetually in between our diverse and at times contradictory memories – what the show was, what it became – and the evidence provided by the numerous but not-quite-authoritative video records of the piece in different stages of rehearsal and presentation.

(Etchells 2015: 92)

Using the archive in the making provokes a strategy of non-collaboration, designed to explore this solitariness: in an impossible dialogue between record and potential by way of memory and technique.

Furthermore, if insider know-how is always embodied, an intense bundling together of the experience of having made with the making now at hand, it can only be realized by way of specific technological assemblages of artist and equipment, techniques and conventions. Performance has a long history of early adoption of technologies, from *deus ex machina* to arc-light to holograms (see Baugh 2005) – a theme I do not have space to develop here. This fundamental relationship to technology is precisely in order to open up and test the relation between the performer's body as medium, *flesh as ur-technology*, and technology as medium: to explore what it is possible to do, say and feel with such equipment, which is as much as to say – what it is *to live in between such media*. So, with the same force, the performance-maker pushes archiving to reveal the limit-case uses of its technology by focusing precisely upon what cannot be captured by way of that equipment. Take the Wooster Group's 'version' of *Hamlet* (2006) which 'stages' the film-document of the 1964 televised version of Richard Burton's stage version of the iconic character. This complex assemblage of film and video technologies was an early method of broadcasting theatre on television – a forerunner of today's streaming of live events into cinemas. In 're-staging' the performance by way of its film-video document, shown 'simultaneously' as part of the new version, the Wooster Group used each framing to disclose different representative regimes, a relation of actual and virtual bodies and images, within which differences and similarities of performance mode constantly tessellated and interpolated the one with the others across a variety media. Each had its own discursivity, spatiality and temporality, but all were experienced together by the auditor-spectator, whose attention flickered between the fleshiness of 'live' actors with their impossible task of 'reproducing' the (superhuman) screen-performances and the record's (inhuman) camera movements. Jones's two modes of experiencing slipped and slid alongside one another – 'watching' the performance and 'viewing' the video (1997: 11) in an out-standing standing-within that precisely opened up that space outside the document but inside the performing. This space was where the non-human of the technological assemblage could be felt. Indeed and in action, here the impossible inherent in all technology, that which exceeds the human, was staged: a kind of science fiction which, in its logic, proposed the as-yet-unrealized future potential of that equipment. In the case of *Hamlet*, this was the 'streaming' experience of the 'live show' which, in its future perfect(ion), threatens to re-place going to the performance itself. At first, as in the Wooster Group's performance, this proposition is always

experienced as fundamentally uncanny, actualized *in performance* as the now-here no-where between Being (human) and the impossible (non-human) techno-archive.

The Wooster Group's strategy of incorporating the archive into the work suggests that, for a document of performance to work, it must be forced to fail entirely and completely on its own terms. For instance, it *makes sense* when documenting a performance with video to use multiple camera and microphone positions, to take advice from the camera-operator as regards what we should be looking at, to reshoot what they missed, to alter the theatrical lighting to accommodate the camera's sensitivity, to select shots in post-production and re-mix the sound. The archival document, whether audio-video, written-word or blog, is just such a device, which the performance-maker exposes for what it cannot do in comparison to the performance itself or the performers themselves. The partiality of each technological approach is necessarily disclosed, and in doing so reveals the gaps inherent within and between all media, however 'naturally' they have been embodied. In this way, each (non-)collaborator within any performance can only express in their own medium an aspect of 'the' work in its totality, which exists somewhere in between the photographs and video-screens, the printed page and dancers' moves: each 'document' necessarily pointing beyond itself towards its lost 'object' – the 'life' of the performance.

Therefore, the use of whatever recording technology, its techniques and skillset, inevitably provokes the performance-maker to *go beyond* what can be captured or known about performance, overflowing form and realizing in each document a failure to do it all and say it all (see Reason 2006 for a comprehensive account of different forms of documentation; and Anderson 2015 for a compelling study of photography's relation to theatre). So that, despite all its craft and ingenuity, we, as both artists and audiences, still feel we need to *look beyond* what the document *as artefact* tells us about the quasi-object of performance it has realized in front of us. I believe this is why performance persists in a digital age: it is in an evolutionary race with technologies' zeal to capture and its processes of commodification, always running ahead of each new platform's claim to higher resolution and greater fidelity, towards that innovation's inadequacy in the face of performer as flesh, performance as event, as experienced, as lived. The current issue for performance-makers is that performance must now work *amongst* the

readiness-to-hand of smart technology, which has foregrounded our relation to the archive in its step-change capacity to capture and replay ever greater instances of our lives, what I will now go on to define as ‘third nature’.

I have argued that if an artist is genuinely open to collaborating with others working in different media, this inevitably leads to a deconstructive practice wherein that which each media cannot express effectively discloses the discontinuity in our everyday perception (see Giddens and Jones 2013). These ‘gaps’ are normally masked by the brain’s desire to produce a continuous account (one might say – a fiction) of our being in the world; whereas, in fact, so much of how we experience is learnt through a combination of physical development and acculturation: in effect, what we inherit from the genome – our first nature, encountering what we acquire through interacting with the world – our second nature. Here, I understand ‘nature’ to be a general process whereby the individual acquires knowledge and techniques through establishing behaviours that are reinforced by exchanging information with the outside environment in ever more predictable circuits of feedback. Firstly, the child’s own body is its environment, and instinctive, inherited systems encourage the learning of how to coordinate hand to mouth, to see, to walk and talk. Secondly, the world enlarges to include multifarious objects beyond what is simply ‘there’, and techniques develop which involve the body interacting with specific technologies external to the body, such as the bicycle or pen, mobile or PC. In each of these natures and in every acquisition, the first encounter is always profoundly disturbing: the knowledge always appears first as nonsense or the technique as ungraspable. Then we ‘master’ it; the trick is embodied; what was outside becomes part of the inside of being to such an extent that its strangeness is forgotten; it becomes as one with us: we incorporate the new knowledge or technique as second-nature. Here, performance as an essentially mixed-media art-form has the potential to intervene in this general processing of how we acquire knowledge by using those very senses and technologies, upon which our techniques are grounded, against themselves, to reveal them as fundamentally strange. I called this deconstructive potential in performance – *de-second-naturing* (see Giddens and Jones 2009).

I want now to suggest that we are living through a profound transformation for the human which many scholars have described as the ‘post-human’ (see Braidotti 2013 and Hayles 1999 amongst others); but which I think is better understood as *third nature*. This paradigm shift in the human-event is occasioned by the development of complex, integrated and networked technologies, assemblages of robotic and digital machines, which have in effect wholly externalized what previously – in the realm of second nature – was experienced as *the relation between* embodied and disembodied knowledges. Firstly, robots do more accurately and enduringly what humans do; secondly, computers ‘think’ faster and more comprehensively than humans think; finally, digital archives ‘remember’ all that we have forgotten. Of course, my anthropomorphization masks the actual non-congruence of these technological assemblages in the same way second-naturing internalizes the fundamental strangeness of older technologies, their non-humanness. All technologies extend the capacity of the human, so second nature is already a move towards the non-(or post-)human, or rather, a troubling of the very notion of what it means to be human, as Steven Mulhall wrote of Heidegger’s ontology of Dasein as *a being whose being is an issue for it* (1996: 14). What marks third nature as paradigmatic is the ubiquity and capacity of these techno-assemblages to store, exchange and correlate data. Through their ever-readiness-to-hand, their locative and interactive capacities, the so-called smart technologies of handheld devices, networked to big-data cloud-technology, have shifted the everyday ways in which we acquire and use knowledges and techniques. Not only do they offer us the experience of a ready-to-hand ‘augmented’ reality, but also their apparent ‘instantaneous’ ‘reply’ embeds the illusion of immediacy, that is, a knowledge apparently without a channel of communication – literally a new kind of ‘embodied’ knowing.

It is possible to trace the impact of third nature across a range of fields. Social media has been assessed as reshaping how individuals relate to their families, peer groups and the wider society, generating a new kind of politics alongside a ‘post-truth’ hystericization of public debate: for example, see Marc Prensky’s highly influential idea of the ‘digital native’, someone under thirty years old, born into a world of personal computers and smart devices (Prensky 2001). The increased interest in memory studies has been ascribed to profound transformations in individuals’ relationship to the polis, the crisis in history emerging from postmodernism and the geopolitical forces of late capitalism: for example,

illuminating studies by Joanne Garde-Hansen (2011), Nancy van House and Elizabeth Churchill (2008), Motti Neiger, Oren Meyers and Eyal Zanberg (2011) analyse the emerging relationship between personal, social and political forces with new media and its technologies, variously describing ‘media memory’, the impact of ‘contextual computing’, and the ‘tangibility’ of memory located in the handheld device. As online archives store ever greater amounts of data, emails, images, videos of individuals’ lives (see Katie Day Good’s locating of Facebook in a history of personal archives – 2012, or Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering’s comparison of analogue and digital photography – 2014), so the anxiety around memory grows, including not only the fear of dementia, but also the acts of remembrance of culturally and politically significant events – ‘the history of a people’: see Andreas Huyssen’s (1995) and Alison Landsberg’s (2004) compelling studies on the socio-political impacts of the techno-archive as producing ‘prosthetic memories’ and ‘cultures of amnesia’, or Anna Reading’s critique of ‘global memory’ (2014).

We could even say, in reference to Foucault’s provocative history of the modern period (1979), that ‘memory’, however constructed and retrieved, has replaced sexuality as the primary aspect of individual identity: see Kerwin Lee Klein’s critique of memory as a ‘therapeutic alternative to historical discourse’ (2000: 145). Scholars have speculated on the evolutionary effect ‘big data’ may have on the brain’s capacity to remember, more specifically, what happens to forgetfulness, the brain’s way of sorting useful information and avoiding the clutter of ‘useless’ memories, when everything we need to know is stored externally and there is no longer an evolutionary driver to remember: ‘With such an abundance of cheap [online] storage, it is simply no longer economical *to even decide* whether to remember or forget.’ (Mayer-Schönberger 2011: 68, my emphasis). Victor Mayer-Schönberger calls for forgetfulness as a resistance to the techno-archive: ‘As we forget, we regain the freedom to generalize, conceptualize, and *most importantly to act*’ (2011: 118, my emphasis, more of this later). From the perspective of this paradigmatic anxiety, the increasing ‘live streaming’ of performances into cinemas and the increased use of online digital repositories for video documentation of shows, alongside the disciplinary contention between liveness and presence, look like performance studies’ own version of

this techno-fear: see Mark Poster's grim analysis – 'The everyday life emerging in information society is a battleground over the nature of human identity' (2006: 230).

From a phenomenological as well as political perspective, the externalization of these 'memories' in 'big data' archives, fulfils what Heidegger had predicted in the 1930s would be 'The Completion of Modernity'. This would be achieved when human life was rendered into that which is producible, that is, reproducible, representable, commodifiable, exchangeable. In *Mindfulness* (2006), Heidegger first makes the link to technology: 'The rational animal has become subject and has developed reason into 'history', whose sway coincides with the sway of technicity' (2006: 21). Then he redefines 'Art in the Epoch of Completeness of Modernity' as that which leads to the producible: '[I]n its pleasantness, art is an unconditionally organized delivery of makability of beings unto machination,' (2006: 23) where '*Machination* means the accordance of everything with *producibility*, indeed in such a way that the unceasing, unconditioned reckoning of everything is pre-directed' (2006: 12). So, for Heidegger, art's out-standing standing-within, its ability to actualize the issue/s of Being, will be replaced by a super-objective, already determined in advance, to render everything in life as representable, thence commodifiable:

What art brings forth is [...] not works in being-historical sense that inaugurate a clearing of being – the be-ing in which beings first have to be grounded. What art brings forth are 'installations' (form of *organizing* beings): 'poems' are 'declarations'; they are 'appeals' in the sense of *calling out* what already exists in the domain of the all-directing and all-securing public. Word, sound and image means for structuring, stirring, rousing and assembling masses, in short, they are means of organizing.

(Heidegger 2006: 23-4, original emphasis)

For Heidegger, this strips art of its decisive function: this producibility of images would inevitably lead to art which

no longer search[es] ‘behind’ or ‘above’ beings, not even feeling ‘emptiness’, but searching and finding exclusively and maximally, what in the enactment of the machinational is ‘liveable’, and as such can be incorporated into one’s ‘own’ ‘life’ – which is shaped by the masses – and thus to foster this as what is solely valid and assuring.

(Heidegger 2006: 26)

So much so, that ‘Sharing the sway of technicity and ‘history’, art undertakes the organizing of beings whose being is decided upon in advance as machination’ (2006: 27). The authenticity of each person’s life is lost in the exchange of images of ‘living’, a bucket-list of ‘experiences’ that are subject to the ‘experience economy’ of current techno-capitalism. Heidegger predicted that the fundamental inter-relation of technology, capital and self in the modern age, what I would call this techno-capital assemblage, would pose a profound threat to the individual’s capacity to (in everyday words) ‘be her/himself’:

Metaphysically, the sway of ‘culture’ is the same as the sway of ‘technicity’. Culture is the technicity of ‘history’ – culture is the manner in which ‘historical’ reckoning with values and ‘historical’ production of goods arrange themselves and so spread the forgottenness of being.

(Heidegger 2006: 147)

The embodied memory of experiencing life disappears into the techno-archive’s data, images, texts, recordings. These external quasi-objects appear to be prompts to memory (in the Proustian sense), but actually repress remembering in favour of reviewing, recalling in favour of retrieving, always images taken by means of the technology and from its point of view – a position no person ever occupied. Consider the ‘selfie’ as the ultimate personal archive: the self, seen from the point of view s/he could never occupy her/himself, that of the equipment. But not that of the Other, in Levinas’s sense of the person whose otherness calls forth one’s own humanity: the selfie *de-selves* the self into a non-human thingness, that which can be *re-presented rather than felt*. In Heidegger’s terms, this set-up ‘organizes’ or ‘pre-directs’ us to see our self *as these lifeless images*: we ‘perform’ them. The apparently instant

retrieval of the image appears to behave like a mirror, as if we were in the same time with our image: however, this image appears out of the techno-archive in an entirely different time, discontinuous with our own: the one thing the selfie cannot be is an image of the self. We repress this strangeness and uncanniness in our second-naturing of this techno-assemblage – smart device—selfie-stick—cloud-archive. Or rather, a terrible reversal of Heidegger's ontology of technology, whereby, instead of second-naturing the technology we use, *our nature disappears into 'its' uses of us*: the techno-archive, in 'remembering' us, 'forgets' our distinctive Being.

This echoes the materialist analysis of Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* in its coupling of technology, mass production and cultural behaviour to forces of deathliness:

The spectacle in its generality is a concrete inversion of life, and, as such, the autonomous movement of non-life. [...] The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.

(Debord 1995: 12)

However, he did not predict that most of these images would be generated by individuals themselves, rather than cultural corporations and governing groups. The platform, enabling uploading and sharing of data, has become dominant over the channels or organizations, generating wealth for its owners indirectly through associated advertising and not directly through sales. 'Pro-suming' has replaced the Marxist horror of the (pacified and passive) consumer: see David Beer and Roger Burrow's comprehensive exploration of play and 'prosumption' in techno-archives (2013). So much so that the techno-archive irrupts into the making of an artwork, *re-replaces re-membering*, e-rases it through a foundational *superimposition*. In the facility with which the archi-byte is accessed and shared, the play between the actual and the possible, which has hitherto been the essential dynamic at work in the rehearsal room, is literally overwritten (e-rased): the archi-byte renders everything down to one field of discursivity, that of the document, or at best the negotiation between documents – the photograph versus the video. All becomes a question of 'organization', as Heidegger disparagingly labels art at the

completion of modernity. Furthermore, the archi-byte is disentangled from the instant of its capture and endlessly replayed, paused, put into reverse, taken out of the flow of making. This desynchronicity brings the after-the-event-ness of the critical perspective into the making: the time of the historian interferes with the artist's time. I might say – the archi-byte's 'manageability' suppresses all other questions; and the interminable narrativizing of one version of events set against another becomes the 'point' of the work, to which endlessly variable intelligibility the artist must be enslaved. In short, in third nature, the time of the historian supplants the time of making: Hal Foster has figured this as 'the archival impulse' of contemporary art, what he sees as 'the will to connect' (2004: 21). So, the autonomy of everyday lives is surrendered to 'smart technology' and 'big data' that feeds back to us our 'likes' and 'preferences', and historicizes our lives as 'time-lines'.

What then can performance as an art do amongst these techno-archives? How is it to respond to this third nature? In countering these hegemonic and deadening forces, I want to suggest that performance-makers' use of such archiving technologies can constitute a decisive resistance to these cultural and socio-economic assemblages. Because the performance-maker's relationship to the archive must expose the partialities inherent in each technological assemblage, it is essentially one of *de-second-naturing*. This mirrors their working across and in between both collaborators and each other's media in the making of the performance itself. The same fundamental approach carries over into the archive: archive-technology is incorporated into the working relations *as if it were another collaborator*. As such, it remains somehow outside, here somehow itself resistant to co-option, even as it elsewhere insinuates itself into our everyday lives apparently so 'naturally'. In this sense, the presence of the archi-byte in the making of a new work potentially works away at the gaps and aporia already in between the collaborators and their media, skillsets and technologies. The archive itself in its materiality adds an additional dimension to the forcing open of these media in the collaborative encounter, opening out the new work's out-standing-standing-within. It obliges a more explicit non-collaboration to happen – a non-collaboration that I have argued elsewhere emerges at the generative core, or better still – the in-between, of all collaboration in performance-making. This particular forcing of the archive and its

technologies in relation to the artist in amongst the making of performance echoes Heidegger's description of the difference between our everyday use of technology and its use in any art-work:

The more handy a piece of [everyday] equipment is, the more inconspicuous it remains. [...] [However,] the more essentially the [art]work opens itself, the more luminous becomes the uniqueness of the fact that it is rather than not. The more essentially this thrust comes into the open region, the more strange and solitary the work becomes.

(Heidegger 1978, 190-1)

So, the art-work refuses to use up the archive-technology *as resource*, as we do our smartphones and cloud storage, by obliging it to appear *as itself* as non-human assemblage, as non-Being. In this way, the artist has the means to re-mind us of the fundamental gap between ourselves as beings and technology as equipment. Otherwise *we* would disappear in our everyday use into the archive-technology as it would disappear into us: we would not know where we ended and it began. The proof of the archive would replace the life of the event, and so, by extension, all those who participated in that event: 'I know I was there because the images are on Facebook.'

As with so many aspects of modernity and its completion, Samuel Beckett's work insightfully actualizes in performance this *aporia-agora*: consider *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958) with its eponymous anti-hero sitting in his pool of light, bent over his tape-machine listening to recordings of his 'younger self'. The first line of the stage direction, which is not alluded to in the following dialogue between voice and recording, is – 'A late evening in the future.' (Beckett 1973: 9) It is as if Beckett understood the consequences of this then new recording technology, the impact it would have upon our ontology of Being, as well as how the theatre can actualize this uncomfortable and addictive slippage between embodied recollection and archival retrieval: between memory and recording technologies: for instance, Krapp's delight in the word 'Spool' (1973: 10); or his desire, having heard 'that stupid bastard [he] took [him]self for thirty years ago' (1973: 17) describe a sexual encounter, to 'be again in the dingle!' (1973: 19) And all this *played* by a 36-year old actor (Patrick Magee, born 1922, in the original 1958

production) pretending to be Krapp in his seventies listening to his thirty-something self. It is as if the performance were able to ‘ravel up the time’ of Krapp’s life by confusing what we see on stage before us – a pretence of the ageing body, with what we hear on the tape - the actor speaking in his ‘own’ youthful voice. This places us in what Marcyrose Chvasta might well have described as ‘a site of virtualization, constituted by potentiality and heterogenesis’ (2005: 167), theatre as virtualization machine, running ahead of the technology to its limit-case.

What Krapp’s situation offers us is the experience of living *as one records*: we see Krapp perform a version of himself for the benefit of the tape-recorder: his topic is a commentary on his ‘younger self’: his ‘life’ has become the process of archiving his life. This differs significantly from the Listener in *Ohio Impromptu* (Beckett 1982) who has read to him an account of one listening to an account of his life: here, we cannot be certain that the prose recounts his life because we do not see him write it. It is not possible to write down the experience *as it happens*: the scriptural technology requires one step aside, sit down and write. However, Krapp with his tape-recorder is the equivalent of the modern tourist who views the places she visits through the screen of her smart device; or the concert-goer who holds his camera-phone aloft and peers at the stage by way of its tiny screen (one step further removed than Auslander envisaged in his encomium to mediatization: see *Liveness*, chapter 3); or more politically in public-order incidents, the camera-on-camera contentions of differing perspectives, police-officer—demonstrator; or more pertinently to this discussion, the ‘streaming’ of theatre performances in cinemas. In all of these cases, projective looking – how we experience any event happening before us – is reduced to viewing the screen’s two-dimensional plane. I am drawn into these ‘performances’ as would a historian, deliberating between two documents, determining the truth as a variable between contesting data-sets. Here, life is replaced by the archi-byte; modernity is completed in the process of uploading the archive. This is because in Heidegger’s terms the experience is reduced to that which is representable (the data-file). In rendering what I am experiencing as a record, its temporality is removed from the dynamic flow of living: it is, in effect, already done, already deadly. And in the uploading, life is produced as ‘an experience’ that *will have been lived in the future perfect of the archive*: the now

is taken out of ‘my’ time, ‘anyone’s’ embodied time, and becomes the only possible future through its ‘production’ as archive.

However, in Krapp’s situation, Beckett leaves me suspended between recordings *as if* life were this silence in between, the blank between pictures, the affect the techno-archive cannot ‘(re)produce’. He demonstrates that a response to the deadly logic of third nature only becomes possible in the deconstructive turn of opening up the space-time between archiving and the archive, between the making of the record and its production *as record*: take, for instance, Krapp’s falling into a reverie as the tape-machine ‘records’ the silence; or the reverse, of Krapp launching into a prepared account before realizing that the machine is not switched on; and then, hearing the ‘younger’ voice on the tape, sitting listening all together in the theatre – performer, character, recording, auditor-spectator. This goes beyond Rebecca Schneider’s recuperation of the archive for performance where she ‘resituates’ knowing as ‘body-to-body transmission’, because her resistance is still predicated upon ‘reading [...] the document as performative act, and as site of performance’ (2001: 105). Beckett shows archiving *in process* alongside the archival *as product*: the capabilities and limitations specific to each are made apparent in their being actualized before us. Witnessing this process discloses an ethically indeterminate out-standing-standing-within in which all participants, Krapp—performer and auditor-spectators alike, can find delight or disturbance in the uncanny slippages between making the archi-byte and interpreting it, between one’s embodied perception of the action (Krapp speaking) and what the document (tape) records. Within this archiving as event, we experience process and product as an undecidable in between thing and action, noun and verb.

Furthermore, this undecidedness is felt most keenly at the point the Krapp—performer decides to act (record). Here, performance as event as art-form interferes with or queers the archive’s partiality, the very thing which Jones among other historians identifies as the engine of its endless productivity of histories (see Jones 1997: 12), and goes beyond the mere ‘organizing’ of differing versions of reading the archi-byte, the what-ifs of writing a history. This act of deciding forces each archi-byte to appear in its material incompleteness, its solitariness, its inability to realize what is not within its purview, to

capture ‘it all’. So by participating in this decisiveness, each encounters the material’s singularity disclosed there-then, as opposed to its producibility and exchangeability: in effect, we recognize human agency – *a will at work*. Heidegger attaches a crucial importance to this ‘will’ in resisting the fall into producibility and in expressing the individual’s most authentic relation to her/his life:

[T]he will to foundational knowing-awareness [...] [T]he ‘will’ ‘unto’ be-ing does not turn be-ing into an ‘object’ of striving so as to grasp be-ing representationally-expanatorily and to set be-ing aside as a possession. This ‘will’ is the will to be-ing, en-owned by be-ing itself unto what is ownmost to this will.

(Heidegger 2006: 52)

It is as if each archi-byte awaits the Krapp—performer’s decisiveness to bring it ‘to life’, to ‘un-render’ it, to give ‘voice’ to its sounds or ‘flesh’ to its images – Krapp’s hand on the tape-machine’s controls. And in acting in relation to the archi-byte, ‘he’ reminds us of our agency, re-sensitizes us to our own unique relation to the archive, actualizes how performance both reveals and overcomes the deadliness of the archive, in which everything will have been documented. The performer’s decisiveness (will) is a call the performance-event obliges us to answer: we must take a stand in relation to the archive: and counter-intuitively, despite Krapp’s endless night of documenting, we are empowered to redeem life from the ‘representable’ and experience from economy. Here, I am echoing Matthew Causey’s plea for a deconstructive turn in performance to confront the hegemonic forces of the technologies of the virtual:

If the theatre hopes to resist [...], it will have to be able to confront the field of the virtual, not through essentialized constructions of failed subjectivities and antiquated technologies, but rather through a strategic manipulation of the virtual, turning the system against itself.

(Causey 2006: 123)

I have proposed that performance, because it is ‘the only art of life’, is an art-form capable of resisting the third nature of humanity when all knowledge will be externalized in massive, integrated techno-

archives, achieving what Heidegger predicted would be the completion of modernity and the enslavement of individuals to the technologies they have created, the ‘bare life’ of ‘experiences’, ‘life styles’ and ‘time-lines’, the fundamental conjugation of which is the future perfect when life cannot be lived because it will already have been lived in the data yet to be archived. Performance’s relationship to the archive and its documents cannot be other than an essentially technological one, a relationship to *techne*, technique and knowledge. So, the artist’s relation to the archive, thence to all technologies, says something more about performance: that at its heart performance embodies *knowing* because *its very performing is an issue for it*. The relations disclosed in the performing, including those between its liveliness and its recordability as evidenced in the archive, the materializing of the in-between of in-betweens, the relation of relations, are what matters to performance, in the same way that Heidegger’s Dasein is a being *whose being is an issue for it*. Indeed, this need or obligation to return to the archive is also a return to what it is that constitutes the performance or act or gesture *as art*. This recursiveness drives every performance tradition as it is itself driven by the crossings across between its making and its archiving *in and amongst fleshes*: every new generation of performers who must go back to those foundations, or rather, must re-build those foundations *as if for the first time and now amongst the techno-archives of our third nature*. Hence performance’s challenge to knowledge as a progressive accumulation of data-sets, objects and reproducible procedures leading towards a ‘better’, (so say) more ‘productive’, future; and also performance’s fundamental relationship to its archives – as perpetual reinvention in the promise of what’s to come.

Perhaps the point in any case is that repetition is never enough. You need to inhabit the structure, breathe differently in it; breathe a second time. You need to know it in order to forget it (partially). [...] You need to know and unknow.

(Etchells 2015: 93)

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